

Contributions

WIDENING THE FIELD

G. W. RENCH

Our earnest brother from Philadelphia made the remark in a reply to my article on missions, that until I had paid as much as he I had no right to oppose widening the field. I am surprised at the arguments used by our brother. I am engaged in a great work for a principle and I can not lower my calling by replying to quibbles. My brethren, I am convinced more than ever that we need *men* more than *money*. There are not a few churches in the brotherhood that are in a turmoil because brother A says to brother B "You have no right to have much say in the meeting because you don't pay much." Such a spirit! As tho money was worth more in the church work than brains! Brethren, can we not get more dignity in our profession? How can we expect our churches to appeal to cultured and sensible people when the ministry says and does so many uncouth things?

"Widening the field" is not the question at all. The limit to the fields has been fixed, and that by divine authority. Jesus says "the field is the world." China, Japan and India is a part of the field. So is America. The question raised by me was the clearing up of the forests of sin and the cultivation of the little crops already planted in the field. We all want the field widened, and we are working to that end. The question is where shall we clear, near our log cabin or go to forests five or ten thousand miles away? Shall we spend our meager strength upon fields where much has already been done, where one dollar will do more than ten elsewhere, and where there are ten calls for laborers where there is one answer, or shall we spend it upon fields where nothing has been done, and where souls are no more precious than in our more favored fields? Our intelligence, the condition of every enterprise started by the church, the history of the past, and the example of the apostolic church, all, with a thousand tongues, cry out against dividing our strength. My other article dealt with the condition of our different lines of work, their lack of support caused largely by shifting the agitation to "foreign missions," "divine healing," "Christian Alliance," (and the Lord knows what next,) and the mistakes of the past—simply facts unanswerable—so I shall speak briefly of the example of the apostolic church. Of course, if I were a Methodist, Presbyterian, or a member of any of the large denominations I would not argue as I do because their condition in this country is altogether different from our own.

What are the facts in reference to the

early church? How do you reconcile the practice of the apostolic church with the modern doctrine preached that in order to be apostolic we must have missionaries in the foreign field? In preaching on the commission I heard the speaker say repeatedly that while we were right on the baptism of the commission we were wrong on the "go" part; just as tho "go" always meant to China and if we did not go across the ocean we did not *go* at all. Of course "all nations" to him means China, Japan or some country across the ocean. If you only take a trip across the ocean and preach as intelligently there as here, then you *go* and *teach all nations*! Many of my readers will recall the next remark made: that while others are wrong on baptism they are right on *going*. The conclusion was that others are as near right as we. There is a sample of reason. Why, if that is the meaning of *go*, the apostolic church was not apostolic because it did not have a *goer*. You talk about the great foreign missionary, Paul. Face these facts: He did not preach but in a single nation. His first missionary journey covered an area no larger than the state of New York. His second journey was but little larger. He never crossed an ocean. There were multitudes of heathen in Spain, England, Germany and China yet Paul visited the churches he planted frequently thus holding the ground occupied. Would that we were as wise. Why did Paul revisit these churches and thus "have a care of all the churches" if his responsibility was fulfilled as soon as he had preached in a community? Why did he not become a "foreign missionary" in order to be apostolic?

Then there are the twelve apostles. To what foreign field did they go. Don't you see, brother, that if the "go" idea as taught by many is correct that not one of the twelve obeyed Christ? Nearly all, if not all lived, preached, and died in Palestine. Were they apostolic? They were inspired men. God indorsed their work time and again by miracle. What becomes of the doctrine that our measure of responsibility is filled as soon as the people learn of Christ, in the light of the twelve apostles? And yet some will preach it.

But the argument used that we are under no obligation to the cities of this country because they have plenty of preaching is the most mischievous. If the devil is not rejoiced at this new turn it takes much to tickle him. Do you see where it will land us? It is this: Cincinnati, (as an example) can be saved without our preachers: then without our doctrine, of course. Therefore, our doctrine is not necessary to save Cincinnati: if not Cincinnati, then no city. So satan can say next, "Your doctrine is

not needed, get off the earth." But our friends don't stop to think that if it is not needed to save American cities neither is it foreign cities. In fact we should no sooner start to "go" than we would find the winds taken out of our sails. No, brethren, our doctrine is of God or it is not. If it is of God cease talking about it being unnecessary to save the cities. Preach it,

It seems to me it is about time to cease trying to prove to the world that we are not apostolic. I have heard but little else for the past three years. Let us take some time in upholding our doctrine. Many have heard for a long time what we are not. Can we not tell them awhile what we are?

For the glory of God and the salvation of the lost.

HINTS ON NATURAL THEOLOGY, OR GOD AND TRUTH FROM THE LIGHT OF NATURE

JACOB KEIM

Take this for a fundamental doctrine.

1. God the Creator of all things that do exist, for he made all things.

2. All created things are natural for God cannot lie, or do a thing inconsistent with himself. Hence whatever exists is natural if God created it. (This does not include abnormal accidents or monstrosities or deformities, which grow out of abuses or perversions of natural law.)

3. Miracles wrought by the hand of God are really as natural as the works of God in familiar things, in nature around us. We may not understand how they are performed, yet the simple fact that we live, or animals and plants live and grow is just as great a puzzle to our finite mind as to raise one from the dead or turn water instantly into good wine. "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God."

God said or the Word said, "let there be light and there was light." The Savior said, "I and the Father are one." So this same Jesus said to Lazarus, "Lazarus, come forth." "Loose him and let him go." Simple words, but with creative power. Who can understand? But who can doubt? This raising of the dead is no more a mystery than the simple living fact that you and I are living today.

Now in order to arrive at the vital truth of the Gospel of Christ as it is corroborated by the light of nature and science, let us look at the words of Christ to Nicodemus (John 3: 3) "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The old comparison of the silk worm is still as correct and true as it is beautiful. The germ of life exists in the egg of the insect. It is first born into life a worm. Its circumscribed life is that of